



## EDITORIAL

Dear friends,

The NARCAG \* is one year old, and to celebrate this event we are pleased to present you with our first Newsletter. The NARCAG has been a very ambitious gamble. Indeed, it is not very easy to work so far apart from each other, even with the Internet! But our determination to save the cheetah in North African Regions \* is our best guarantee for success, and will contribute to ensure the survival of this species.

After one short year of existence, and through simple financial and human means, we have acquired the following results: a cheetah census which is considered a priority by the SSC/IUCN Cat Specialist Group has just been started in Benin. Hugues Akpona, Safouratou Alfa Gambari Imorou and Rachel Berzins, with the help of the staff's work at the Pendjari and W-Benin parks, have carried out a survey of the cheetah's status in these areas, and confirm that it is very urgent to act now for its conservation.

The WAZA has recently confirmed its commitment to support us, by counting us among its other « WAZA-Branding of in-situ projects »\*.

Thanks to efforts developed by the active members of the Cheetah EEP, new young cheetahs have increased the captive population in zoological parks, under the attention of the EEP coordinator, veterinarians, keepers and managers. I would like to thank the different partners for their help in the creation of this work, and wish you a very pleasant reading...

Dr Françoise Claro, OGRAN / NARCAG' Coordinator

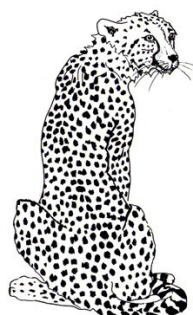
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Web site : <http://www.szp.fr/ogran>

\*NARCAG : North African Region  
Cheetah Action Group  
North African Regions : North of the equator



\* <http://www.waza.org/conservation/projects/projects.php?id=6>

## *The NARCAG / OGRAN : an action group for cheetah conservation in North African regions.*

Confronted with the lack of knowledge about the present cheetah situation in North African Regions and about threats affecting its survival, a cheetah study group has been created from the initiative of specialists in cheetah conservation ex- and in-situ, with the support of the SSC/IUCN Cat Specialist Group. The North African Region Cheetah Action Group or NARCAG\* was created 2 February 2005 in Paris (National Museum of Natural History).

NARCAG / OGRAN Website :  
<http://www.szp.fr/ogran>.



Participants to the NARCAG meeting – 2 february 2005.



### *Its aim is to :*

- . Increase and broadcaste knowledge on cheetah .
- . Define threats weighing on this species.
- . Carry out conservation means.
- . Reinforce the relationships between the partners involved in cheetah conservation ex-situ (captivity) and in-situ (nature).
- . Constitute and animate a network for the monitoring and cheetah conservation.
- . Acquire and put together abilities and means.
- . Conduct cheetah conservation applied studies.

\* North African Region Cheetah Action Group / NARCAG

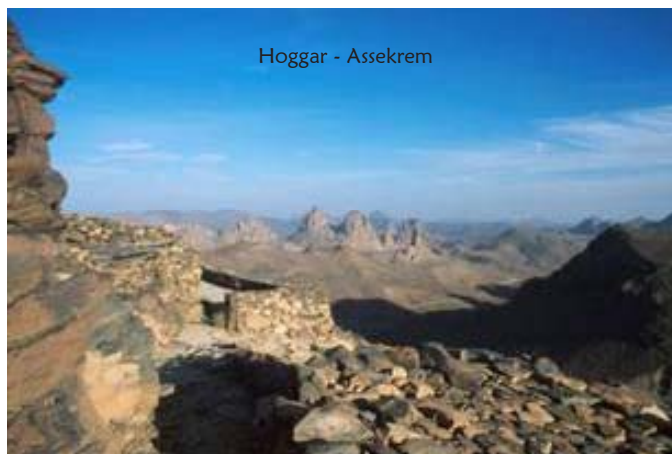
## *The second NARCAG meeting*



The next NARCAG meeting will take place from the 18th to the 24th November 2006 – in the Ahaggar Wilaya of Tamanrasset, Algeria. The first three days will consist of discussions and workshops.

Discussions will take stock of the NARCAG activities since 2005, as well as of the present status of the cheetah in Algeria. Workshops will approach the topics of: protocol in collecting data, coordinating in North African Regions and internationally, training to monitor cheetahs and enlarging the local people's awareness of cheetah protection.

For those interested, this meeting will be followed by three days of excursions in the beautiful area of the Hoggar, around Tamanrasset.



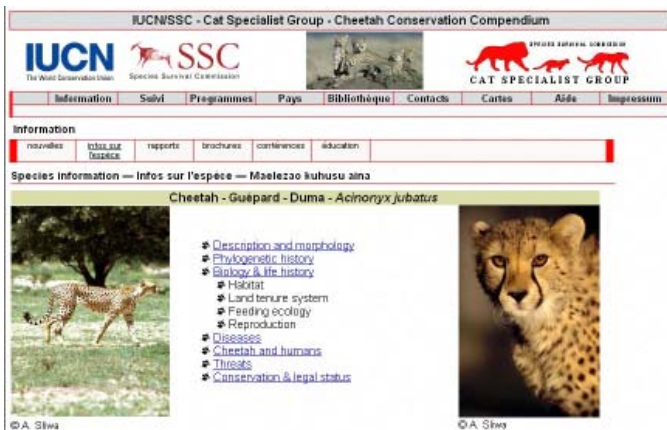
Hoggar - Assekrem

It is still possible for you to register if you wish to participate in this meeting. You can contact us at the following email address: [ogran001@yahoo.fr](mailto:ogran001@yahoo.fr). Then you will receive a registration form, as well as the definitive programme and general information about this meeting.



Hoggar - gueltas

## The Cheetah Conservation Compendium is online:



The Cheetah Conservation Compendium created by the SSC/IUCN Cat Specialist Group has recently been put on line at the following address :

<http://www.catsg.org>

All information on cheetah conservation, such as : recent data, maps, documents and other ... are available on this compendium.

The NARCAG has contributed to this compendium with the realization of a bibliography specific to the cheetah in North African Regions.

## News from the Saharian cheetah in Algeria :

A scientific mission carried out by the Sahelo-Saharan Interest Group (GISS)<sup>1</sup>, from the 7th to the 23d March 2005 in the Ahaggar National Park (Algeria), allowed new information to be brought out about the Saharian cheetah in this area.

If no cheetahs were sighted during this mission, information was gathered from interviews of local people, tracks of the species and prey killed...which gives evidence of the presence of this species in this area.

This species appears to be widely scattered in this area, but in low density. The Ahaggar area would become an important refuge for the cheetah population.



<sup>1</sup> Reference: Wachter, T., De Smet, K., Belbachir, F., Belbachir-Bazi, A., Fel-lous, A., Belghoul, M. & Marker, L. (2005). Inventaires de la faune du Groupe d'Intérêt Sahélo-Saharien. Partie 4: Massif central de l'Ahaggar, Algérie (Mars 2005). iv + 40 pp.

## Meeting with the cheetah in Dubaï / United Arab Emirates



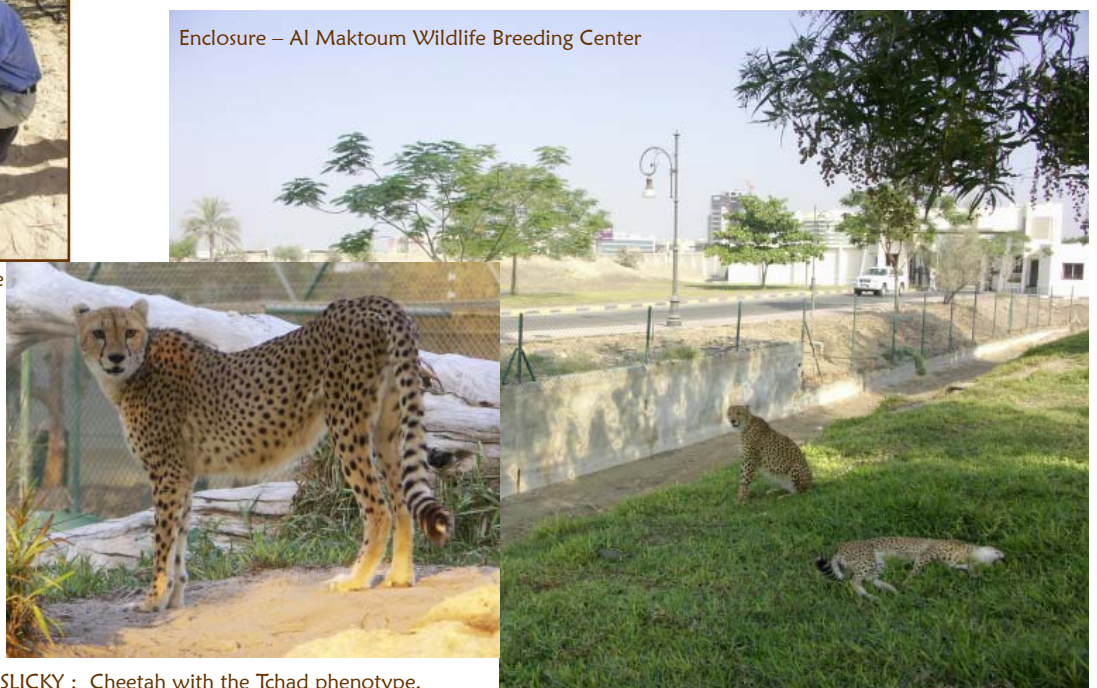
SAFAWILD centre : birthing lodge

\* Director of 5 wildlife breeding centers in Dubaï and Cheetah EEP coordinator.

\*\* Operations manager from the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife, Sharjah.

In November 2005, Françoise Claro and Bernard Faye (MNHN/IRD/SZP) met Mrs. Sean McKeown\* and Paul Vercammen\*\*, with whom they had visited three wildlife breeding centers, with a total of 90 individual cheetahs of North African Regions. At the end, a catalogue with cheetah phenotype in North African Regions and containing picture and identification sheets for 45 individuals was created.

Enclosure – Al Maktoum Wildlife Breeding Center



SLICKY : Cheetah with the Tchad phenotype.

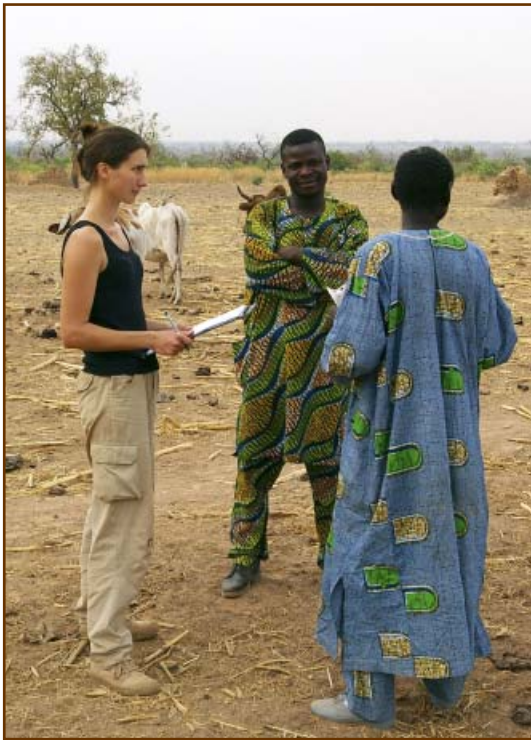
## Cheetah conservation and sustainable development mission in Benin.

A study mission initiated by the Zoological Society of Paris took place from December, 2nd 2005 to February, 26th 2006, in north Benin, in collaboration with CENAGREF\*, the University of Abomey-Calavi of Cotonou and the Program W Park-ECOPAS\*\*.

Its objective was to assess cheetah status in the Pendjari National Park region (2 755 km<sup>2</sup>), Benin W Park (5 020 km<sup>2</sup>) and outskirts, as well as to determine sustainable development actions that would contribute to cheetah conservation. After enquiring with involved park agents and villagers in the outskirts, we learned that cheetah observations are rare. About forty cheetah observations occurred in 2005 for about seventy observations recorded by fifty agents since 2000. This low observation number, nevertheless having gone up over the past six years indicates a low species density in the study area. The exact reasons could not be identified. Cheetah makes use of various preys such as the Buffon cob, but has to share its habitat with two competing predator species, the lion and the spotted hyena. These two species are the main animals responsible for livestock attacks in the outlying villages, while only one cheetah attack was noted in Daga, in 2004. Poaching intensity specifically on the cheetah could not be assessed, but two cheetah skins were seized by the authorities in the region a few years ago. This illegal activity seems to be decreasing, thanks to stronger anti-poaching enforcement and penalties.

The University of Abomey-Calavi of Cotonou, the Institut of Research and Sustainable Development (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD) and the National Museum of Natural History (MNHN) wish to conduct scientific research to understand the reasons for this apparent low cheetah size in the north of Bénin. The ZSP wishes to develop an environmental educational programs as well as sustainable development actions. The aim is sensitize the local population on cheetah conservation, as the cheetah is not a well-known species despite being the Pendjari Park emblem.

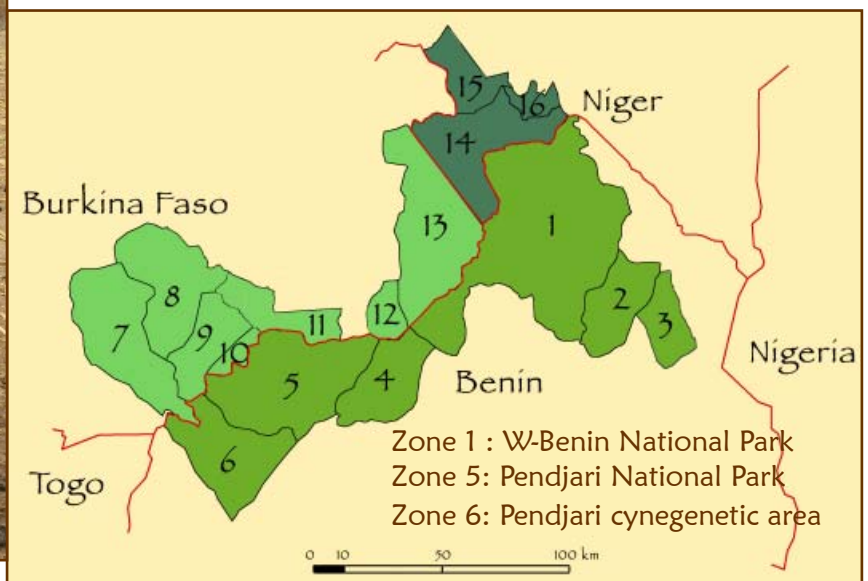
*Acknowledgment: the ZSP wants to thank all its sponsors which have allowed this project to take place: the Fondation Nature&Découvertes, zoos of Amnéville, la Palmyre, Montpellier, Doué-la-Fontaine, the safari of Peaugres and the Saint-Laurent society.*



Interview of a Peuhl herder.

\* National center of wildlife reserves management or 'Centre National de Gestion des Réserves de Faune' : <http://firstnet.bj>

\*\* Protected ecosystems in Sahelian Africa or 'Ecosystèmes Protégés en Afrique Sahélienne'



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